

Lou Mansolillo

From: David Nickerson <nickersontree@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 4, 2024 1:34 PM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Cc: Nickerson, David
Subject: H7293

Dear House, I am an ISA Certified arborist. There are just a handful of us in R.I. I support the intent of the Old Growth Forest Protection Act. Other arborists do as well. We all would like to see what our forests looked like when our ancestors arrived.

The findings are true. Old growth forests have large amounts of bio-diversity and are great carbon sinks. Conventional logging practices do not work right now as far as restoration is concerned. The overabundance of deer do not allow new oak, maple, and other native tree species to grow and thrive because they eat them right up. Clear cut areas are also subject to the influx of non-native invasive species. Even the natural forests that have not been disturbed are not rejuvenating the way they used to because of the excessive deer population.

The old growth forests will provide an educational opportunity as well. The trees in the old growth forests that have survived numerous insect invasions and droughts may have something in their genes and be a valuable seed source for future plantings in other places in R.I.

Old growth forests are great recreation areas also.

Please pay attention to the published science and protect R.I.'s environment.

I realize some of the bill may need to be tweaked to satisfy others and I think that would work. If such a small percentage of R.I.'s forests are small, why not protect them.

Sincerely, David Nickerson